

## Message Text

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73

ACTION AID-20

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 ADP-00 EB-11 IGA-02 CIAE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SCI-06 NSF-04 IO-12 TRSE-00

XMB-07 OMB-01 SS-15 NSC-10 RSR-01 /136 W

----- 000504

R 221330 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5598

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY FORT LAMY

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: ECON, SGEN, XY, NG

SUBJECT: SAHELIAN ZONE CONFERENCE

REF: STATE 095825

1. WE CONSIDER HIGH- LEVEL, WIDELY- SUPPORTED MEETING TO EXAMINE A  
LONG- TERM, SYSTEMATIC AND CONCERTED APPROACH TO SPECIAL  
DEVELOPMENT  
NEEDS OF SAHELIAN ZONE OF AFRICA EXCELLENT IDEA AND MINIFESTLY  
DESIRABLE MOVE. WE WILL BE CONFRONTED NOT ONLY WITH TRYING TO  
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REPAIR SEVERE DAMAGE TO THESE COUNTRIES OF CURRENT DROUGHT, ESPECIALLY IN LIVESTOCK SECTOR, BUT WITH DETERMINING WHAT STEPS CAN BE TAKEN TO PREVENT RECURRENCE OF PRESENT CRISIS AND TO ARREST PROGRESSIVE ECOLOGICAL DETERIORATION OF THIS REGION. ALTERNATIVE IS DISCOURAGING PROSPECT OF NEED FOR CONTINUED AND PROBABLY INCREAS-  
ING INTERNATIONAL RELIEF TO SAHELIAN COUNTRIES, AS PRESSURE OF POPULATION ON AVAILABLE ARABLE LAND AND FOOD SUPPLIES INEXORABLY MOUNTS.

2. THIS IS PROBLEM OF SUCH IMPORTANCE AND MAGNITUDE THAT WE BELIEVE IT SHOULD BE DISCUSSED PERSONALLY WITH PRESIDENT DKORI, WHO WOULD MOREOVER BE, IN OUR VIEW, A KEY AFRICAN STATESMAN TO SPEARHEAD INITIATIVE OF THIS KIND. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK WITHIN WHICH SUCH A MEETING CONVENED SEEMS LESS IMPORTANT TO US THAN CALLING IT. DIORI COULD ACT IN HIS CAPACITY AS CURRENT CEAO PRESIDENT, OR SIMPLY AS AFRICAN CHIEF OF STATE DIRECTLY CONCERNED WITH SAHELIAN DEVELOPMENT PROBLEMS AND ENJOYING WIDE AUDIENCE AND RESPECT THROUGHOUT WEST AFRICA. WE BELIEVE THERE IS NO NEED GET LOCKED INTO FRAMEWORK OF OUAGA MEETING OF MARCH 23-24 WHICH WAS AD HOC INITIATIVE AND NOT PARTICULARLY WELL-ATTENDED. QUESTION OF WHERE SUCH CONFERENCE MIGHT MOST EFFICIENTLY BE HELD ALSO STRIKES US AS SECONDARY, AND ONE WHICH SHOULD PROBABLY BE LEFT TO AFRICANS TO DECIDE AMONG THEMSELVES. OUTSIDE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE WITH ORGANIZING MEETING WOULD HOWEVER DOUBTLESS BE IMPORTANT STIMULANT. AS TO PARTICIPANTS, WE THINK NIGERIA, CHAD, CAMEROUN, SUDAN AND MAURITANIA OUGHT TO BE INCLUDED AND POSSIBLY ALSO DAHOMEY, GHANA AND TOGO, IN ADDITION TO SEAO MEMBERS.

3. AS TO PRACTICAL APPROACH, PRESIDENT DIORI LEAVES NIAMEY MAY 23 FOR ADDIS OAU MEETING AND WILL NOT RETURN UNTIL AROUND MAY 29. IN INTERVAL, WE WOULD WELCOME AID/ W AND AF'S VIEWS WHETHER WE SHOULD ENCOURAGE PRESIDENT DIORI TO THINK IN TERMS OF ACTING AS CONVENOR OF SUCH A SAHELIAN MEETING.

4. FOREGOING REPRESENTS JOINT EMBASSY/ RDO VIEWS.  
MCCLELLAND

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\*\*\* Current Handling Restrictions \*\*\* n/a

\*\*\* Current Classification \*\*\* LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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**TAGS:** ECON, NG, XY, SGEN  
**To:** ABIDJAN  
AID  
BAMAKO  
BONN  
BRUSSELS  
DAKAR  
FORT LAMY

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